



How to Add An SSD To The 27" iMac (Late 2015)

Replacing the HDD for a SSD inside the late 2015 iMac 27" we are using the built-in cables.

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INTRODUCTION

I was nervous buying the the late 2015 iMac 27" because there was such little information about it. I could only find a few videos specific to the tear down and very little info about adding or upgrading to an SSD. There was tons of info about the 2014 and early 2015 model, but noting on the late 2015. So here we go.

I'm disconnecting the SATA & power cable from the HDD, adding a 2.5" SSD (leaving the HDD in place).

Step 1 — Replacing the SATA HDD for SATA SSD



- Opening the Retina iMac's can be tricky and you need the right tools. And you're going to need a few things to open the case and to install the SSD correctly.
- Here's the current iFixit tear down that shows you what you're getting into. [iMac Intel 27" Retina 5K Display Teardown](#)
- And from our friends at OWC, they have a great video on taking the HDD complete out and replacing it with an SSD, but this guide will show how to simply leave the HDD and install the SSD.
<https://vimeo.com/139364064>
- Make sure to grab the essential tools like: [Pro Tech Toolkit](#) and [Jimmy](#) for opening up the iMac, although I used a medical scalpel, I found that the "guitar pick" was too weak and too thick. The "Jimmy" would be a great substitute for a scalpel.
- You will also need the OWC In-Line digital thermal sensor, so that the iMac temperature control stays under control. Otherwise your fans will spin at full speed. This OWC kit also includes the needed tape to close your iMac back up.
<https://eshop.macsales.com/item/Other%20...>

Step 2



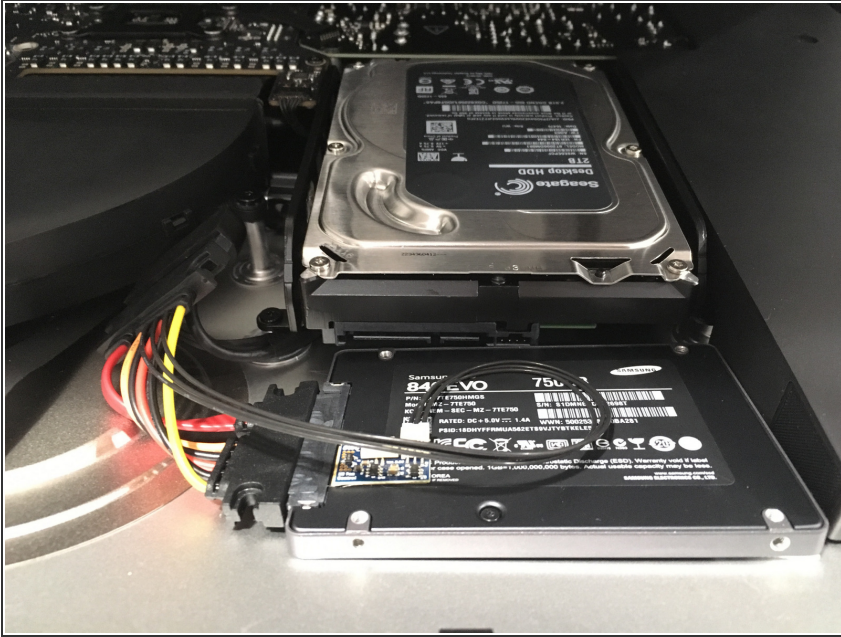
- The current iFixit and OWC guides have you disconnect the display cables, with this guide you don't need to. I kept my iMac horizontal and after opening the display I simply used two standard pencils to prop up the display on both sides.

Step 3



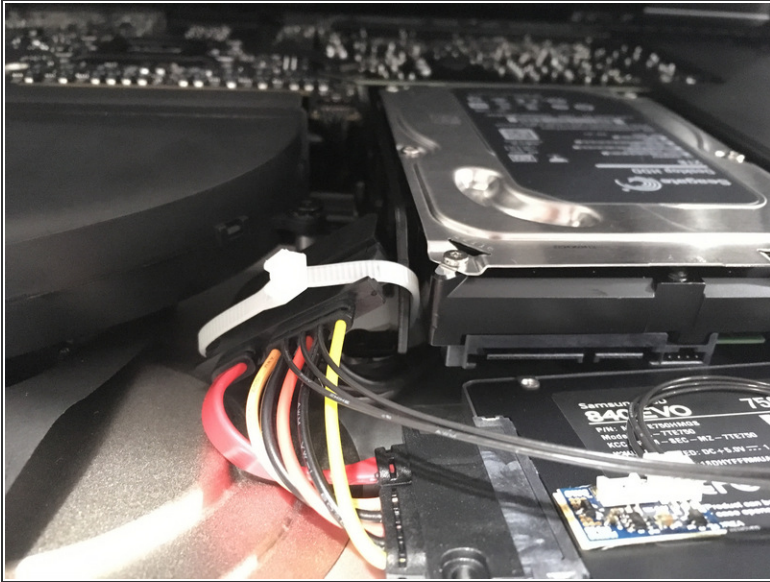
- So here you can see that I've detached the SATA cable from the HDD, attached the OWC thermal sensor cable and have already connected the SSD.
- The OWC cable is a bit stiff but all I had to do was twist it a bit so the SSD laid flat inside the iMac. This entire pocket where I show the SSD is normally empty and the perfect spot for a tiny SSD.

Step 4



- Next I attached the temperature sensor to the SSD, while keeping the cables as organized and compact as possible.
- Here I also secured the SSD down to the iMac with some 3M adhesive squares. Since the iMac is curved right here I needed something that would hold it in place but was also thicker than most adhesives.
<https://smile.amazon.com/dp/B00O1WFF8U>
- I used four squares total, but I doubled them up. Stacking one on top of another twice; once on the back left and once on the front right.

Step 5



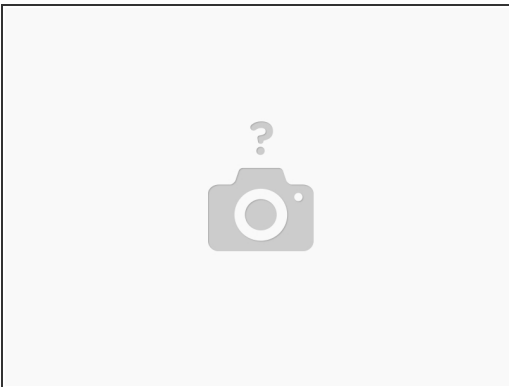
- For the final step I simply zip tied the thermal sensor cable to the HDD bracket to keep everything in place.
- I also wanted to pull the OWC cable down away from the display as much as possible. As you can see from the second picture there is still plenty of room as the OWC cable and zip tie are well below the HDD and fan exhaust.

Step 6



- That's it! I can't use the 2TB HDD, but I was able to install an SSD with minimal effort and risk without removing the display, disconnecting the display cables, or removing the speaker, or HDD.
- As a bonus, the HDD versions of the iMac come as "Fusion Drives" so they have a PCIe SSD attached as well. Mine had a 128GB SSD installed so I do have access to that as an extra drive now. I plan to install Windows on the PCIe drive via Boot Camp.

Step 7



- For the last step you need to remove and replace all the 3M double sided tape found on the iMac outer rim. In step 1 I list buying the thermal sensor that comes with the [3M tape](#).

To reassemble your device, follow these instructions in reverse order.

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